

APPROVED

Commission on Aging

Minutes of the November 13, 2012 Meeting

These minutes will not be official until approved at the next COA meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Will Bigl (2012), Sam Gordon (2014), Bev Korba (2014), Don Nolan (2014), Joan Terry, (2014)

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES: Emil Poirier (Jensen's)

STAFF: Kevin Grunwald (Dir. of Human Services), Cindy Dainton, Senior Center Coordinator

REGRETS: April Holinko (2014), Laurie McMorro (2014)

GUESTS: Lida Bilokur, Betty Jane Karnes

Minutes: The minutes of the October, 2012 meeting were approved as written.

Correspondence – Kevin distributed copies of a publication called Is Your City Age-Friendly? that offers criteria to help judge our community. This issue was introduced at our October meeting. Although the new downtown area is no doubt meeting ADA requirements, Kevin reminded us that they are minimal and to make the area senior friendly may be a separate issue.

Wellness Center – Kevin reported that the applications for the vacant Senior Services position yielded only one qualified candidate. He and Cindy will interview that applicant. It may be appropriate for the Town Council Personnel Committee to review the job description, as the stipulation that an applicant must be licensed clinical social workers is very limiting.

FoodShare - The program continues every other Thursday at 11:30 in the Wright's Way parking lot. Some who come for food are unable to stand in line and volunteers would be useful. The program will distribute turkeys for the Thanksgiving holiday to those who have applied.

Senior Center –Cindy distributed copies of her October report. She is planning a number of events prior to each holiday in an effort to meet the needs of those who spend holidays alone. Cindy assured the Commission that we would be welcome to meet at the Senior Center and if we would like to return there she will help us find space. However, it might be necessary to change our meeting time. The Veterans Day celebration luncheon at the Community Center was well attended with about 150 present.

Community Information – Emile said Jensen's celebrated with a harvest dinner recently following by karaoke. He asked about support services offered by the Town during the super storm as someone from Jensen's needed help and could not find any.

Old Business - Will made a motion that we drop the goals from the Town's 2020 Plan from further consideration. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Commission Goals – Kevin reminded us that the annual report included goals for the coming year. Since none of the members had a copy available, the decision was to discuss our goals at our next meeting.

Transportation Issue – Will said he attended a recent meeting of the Town transportation committee and he said the group listened to the concerns that were raised. He asked what our priorities are for the coming year.

Opportunity for the Public to Address the Commission – Betty Jane Karnes told us what the Storrs Congregational Church is doing for Thanksgiving outreach in cooperation with the Human Services department.

Steven Legalt updated the Commission on his plans to build a senior living facility in the southern part of Mansfield in the vicinity of Pleasant Valley Road. He has received some financial backing and is working on zoning approval. In addition to independent living, the facility would offer several areas of special care not currently available in our area.

Respectfully submitted, Joan Terry, secretary

Next Meeting: December 10

These are revised goals to be discussed at the next meeting.

**PROPOSED Goals for the
Commission on Aging, 2012-2013**

1. Monitor Mansfield's Long-Range Plan for seniors with a continued focus on priority issues of senior safety, information dissemination, senior center space needs and health care needs including changing federal benefit programs.
2. Continue to advocate for the installation of a bus shelter at the Route 275/Community Center bus stop.
3. Advocate for improvements to the local transportation system.
4. Encourage the Downtown Partnership to make the new Storrs downtown senior friendly.
5. Provide information regarding tax relief available to residents.
6. Monitor the development of an independent living/assisted living facility in Mansfield.
7. Support the hiring of a Senior Services Social Worker.
8. Support the implementation of the FoodShare program.